

Andis Gazette

October 2003 - issue 1 Vol.39

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The 2002- 2003 Innis Herald

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Letter To The Editor:

"Hi.....I'd like to be taken off your mailing list. I think that I signed up at one of your pub nights piss drunk.

Thanks!**

*This is an actual letter. We swear! It's too grammatically poor to be made up by us!

community

An update from the ICSS on the war against tedium

by Jacky Sin, Vice President, ICSS

After a brief but memorable period spending time with our families (we blame *that* on the guy in Ohio who blacked-out the entire Eastern Sea Board) and rotting away in front of the big screens watching *Gigli* and *From Justin to Kelly*, we must, alas, get back to the real world.

Of course, by the 'real world,' we don't mean sipping overpriced coffees and pretending not to notice the film crews on Devonshire making the next straight to video disaster. By real world, we mean getting involved with events that define life after classes, we mean events like intramural sport matches, the Innis Pub Nights, the Formal, study break gatherings and, of course, the end of year boat cruise. Hi, we're the Innis College Student Society, Innis' student government, your guides and navigators to your Innis adventures outside of the classroom.

This year, the ICSS has already organized a tour for commuter frosh students, a chill-out welcome back patio party, and with a master's stroke, corrupted the minds of 200 plus froshes with our week-long celebration: *Innisense '03*.

Frosh Week was fantastic. First year students enjoyed a yellow-bus-load of events including a visit by hypnotist Casey St. Jones (he made someone use their own shoe as a phone - a SHOE, as a PHONE!); played beach volleyball in a warehouse; breakfasted with first year professors; dined with the Principal; and partied at Hart House Farm. It was without a doubt a memorable week for first years, and we want to thank all the frosh leaders who stayed with us throughout, from water fights against Woodsworth to waiting for the bus back from the farm. It was a great way to start the year, and was only a taste of things to come.

We have already started the intramural sport teams for the term; we encourage everyone who didn't get a chance to sign-up this term to join a team in January when the next term begins. Planning for the Innis College Formal is also underway; we promise that it will be decadent and hedonistic but come with a sensible and easy-to-swallow price. More information will be available shortly at the ICSS office and you are all invited to join the organizing committee once the details are finalized. Also on the social front, we will be having our first ICSS pub night as well as a study-break night within the next few weeks at the Innis Café; keep your eyes on the bulletin board at 'the pit' just outside the Innis College Town Hall for details.

On the clubs front, we will be starting the Innis Jazz Band again. Drop by the ICSS office sometime this month when we will have more information. If you are interested in STARTING a club at Innis, we encourage you to drop by to get more info. Actually, on that note, we encourage you to drop by even if you have NO questions or suggestions or are absolutely against the act of acquiring information. We recently re-decorated our office and we're inviting all of you to drop by to say "hi." You can also rent a locker (they're \$5 for the year) or just crash on the sofa and study. Yes, it is a party and everyone is invited.

If by now you have not pulled out your hair wondering where this ICSS office is, we ask you why not. If however, you have pulled out your hair and those of your friends in frustration, we would like to let you know that the office is at Innis College, by the end of the hall past the Innis Café. We hope that you will drop by or drop us a line at inniscollegestudentsociety@hotmail.com. Your student government is eager (not unlike beavers) to get this year rolling with zany Innis events and plan to, with your help, make this school year a year you'll never want to forget.

editorial

Flushing out the Pipes of hatred

now is the time
to defend our
campus and our
community

by *Stephanie Silverman*



The ongoing conflict in the Middle East often seems far removed from our own lives. We tend to see it as a series of events disconnected from ourselves. The everyday tragic events that occur there are so incongruous with the every day we experience that it is almost impossible to imagine the terror hitting home. And then there was 9/11. And then there was the Anthrax scare. And then there were the knee-jerk accusations of why and how and for what purpose did we experience the summer blackout. And now Daniel Pipes has been appointed to the board of directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace and campus politics have become unduly embroiled in the rush towards the clash of civilizations.

Many journalists are already wary of Pipes' biased analyses of current events. You may remember him as the man who famously warned that the Murrah Building bombing in May, 1995 in Oklahoma City was only the beginning of an Islamic jihad. Pipes has managed to forge for himself the dubious distinction of having made a career out of Arab and Muslim bashing. His book, *Militant Islam Reaches America*, has been slammed across the world for, as one reviewer for the *Weekend Australian* put it, "passing off egregious nonsense as alarming statement of fact" (Interesting to note is that Norton, the same company that publishes many of our coursebooks, published Pipes' book.) Pipes intoned to the 2001 convention of the American Jewish Congress that "I worry very much from the Jewish point of view that the presence, and increased stature, and affluence, and enfranchisement of American Muslims...will present true dangers to American Jews." It is interesting to note that if 'blacks' was substituted for 'Muslims' and 'whites' for 'Jews' then his speech could be confused as KKK rhetoric. His points are derogatory, racist, purposefully inflammatory, and trivialize the very real threat of anti-Semitism in North America today. In fact, at a time when hostility towards the Jewish people is growing once again, Pipes is a thorn in the sides of everyone trying to wake the world up to the re-emerging Cerberus of anti-Semitism. Pipes' comments and "cru-
sade" cause people to lose respect for the very real threat of anti-Semitism and this is yet another reason why his paper should not be allowed to circulate unnoticed on-campus.

You may not be already familiar with the name of Daniel Pipes but he's been in your backyard all along. After all, his organization, the Middle East Forum, a right-wing think-tank in Philadelphia, has been active on our campus for over a year now. No, there haven't been any confrontations like those at Concordia; however, his newspaper, *Campus Watch* or *Anti-Semitism 101*, has been circulating in and around the St. George area since its inception. This paper masquerades as a legitimate local student rag although its wording and authorship immediately betrays its true roots in the United States' lobby. A mere perusal of its content reveals two of Pipes' staunch positions: He is strongly pro-Israel and clearly anti-Muslim. Attitudes such as this build only barriers, not bridges. Men and women like Pipes reinforce the racist notion that if you support Palestine, or even the Islamic world in general, it automatically means you're anti-Israel, and thus anti-Semitic.

Pipes has gone so far as to create a blacklist of professors across North America who have been seen to espouse too much of a pro-Palestinian slant in their lectures and writings. He has invited youth across the continent to join in his witch hunt and "(e)ngage in an informed, serious, and constructive critique that will spur professors to make improvements. [The members of the Middle East Forum] look forward to the day when scholars of the Middle East provide studies on relevant topics, an honest appraisal of sensitive issues, a mainstream education of the young, a healthy debate in the classroom, and sensible policy guidance in a time of war." In other words, a day when McCarthyism once again monitors the free speech that we, especially in our environment that is dependent on keen discussion and freedom of thought, value so highly. Like McCarthy, this present-day propagandist is simply feeding off of the same fear and uncertainty that fueled the mayhem of the 1950s. Unlike the 1950s, however, over 100 professors asked to be added to the list in a show of support for the 8 professors whose "dossiers" were initially published on the website, www.campus-watch.org. Douglas Card, one of the initial 8 professors and the man accused of calling Israelis "baby killers" based on faulty testimony of disgruntled students, has called the experience "one of the most painful experiences of my life. From here to Jerusalem, where it also was published, it libeled my name and the university's... We must not allow intimidation to replace thoughtful, open-minded discourse in our communities and on our campuses during this time of ethnic conflicts and increasing nationalism."

It is therefore important that we raise questions as to why Bush would appoint Pipes to a position in a quasi-governmental think-tank like the U.S. Institute of Peace. We are all well aware of the fragility of the situation in the Middle East and the quick callback of retired Lt. Gen. Jay Garner from a similar appointment. Why continue to act in this manner? Why provide yet more fodder for terrorists like Osama bin Laden who argue that the West is deliberately offensive to Islam? If we truly are the "Great Minds" then it is our duty as custodians of the "Great Future" to block this hate-monger from our campus, and question the reasons why he has been given such a posting by the American President. His racist views have a right to be aired but his witch-hunting tactics and explicit inflammatory rhetoric should be curtailed. We must not let this co-opting of the truth happen to members of our community and to the respectability of our local free press. Just as proper and fair solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict must be sought out, so too should the war on academic discussion be stopped.

5 things... U of T students need to learn to do

according to Nicole Polivka.

1. Don't bring your cell-phone to class.

"But Nicole," you say, "I only leave it on every once in a while." No you don't and I'll tell you why: it has gotten to the point where if a cell phone *doesn't* go off in class, it's unusual. If it only happened once or twice a year, fine, but it happens almost every day. My classes have, on average, fifty people in them. Fifty people multiplied by once in a while does not equal almost every day. So since you clearly are incapable of turning them off, don't even bring them to class. Unless you know someone who's dying, about to give birth, or you're a doctor on-call, there is absolutely no reason that people *need* to be able to get in touch with you twenty-four hours a day. If you're an arts student, you usually have about fifteen hours of class a week, which means an average of three hours of class a day. If you can't live without a phone for three hours you have a serious problem. If you're an engineer, and you have eight hours of class a day, well, you're in class for those eight hours so you can't get in touch with anyone anyway. Remember, once upon a time, when people could only make phone calls from their houses because that was the only place with a phone, and the universe didn't explode, and the sky didn't fall down? Remember, back in high school, when you went to school all day and managed to go a whole day, can you imagine, *a whole day* without calling anybody? So for the few hours of class you have, I'm sure you can live without it. I know you can live without it. It's not wired to your heart like a pace-maker. Plus during the day it's cheaper to use a payphone anyway.

2. Wear Snow-pants and Winter Boots

Tell me how you can go to a school in a city that is slush four months out of the eight months you spend here and wear sneakers and jeans every day. And then you get to class and you bitch about how the salt and dirty slush ruins your jeans, and how your feet and legs are all wet and cold because the jeans and sneakers just soak up the slush, as if to say, "There is no solution to this problem! It is one of the great mysteries of the universe! We will never know the answers!" BUY SNOWPANTS AND WINTER BOOTS. School is not a fashion show, and even if it was, there are some very good looking snowboarding snow-pants on the market. I know. I own a pair. And guess what? When I get to class I am both warm and dry. We're not talking the down-filled pair of suspenders your mom made you wear. We're talking, "Hey good-lookin', where'd you get those snow-pants?" You'll be the coolest, driest kid in school.

3. Watch where you're going.

When walking through a big crowd of people, you're counting on the fact that they're watching where they're going because you both need that one second pause before collision to get out of each other's way. If only one person's decking, it doesn't work; there isn't enough time. I know you have a tough time keeping your focus when there are shiny objects, colours, and bright lights. Seriously though, from now on, if you're not looking, I'm walking right into you because we're going to collide anyway, so you'd better learn how to deal with my elbow in your sternum. It is not my job to keep obstacles out of your path. I am not a white walking stick. You're the reason so many pedestrians die on the streets of Toronto each year. You're just lucky I'm not a car.

4. Shut up.

It's really great that you've managed to relate what's going on in class to some personal anecdote, but keep it to yourself. We're all very happy that you're learning, but do it on your own time. And if you manage to relate something in class to some other book you've read, some book not in the course? We're all very impressed and proud that you are able to read but I didn't pay over \$800 for this course to listen to you talk. When they finally do offer you a tenured position in the Department of Idiocy you can bet I won't be paying to hear you talk then, either. And on that note...

5. Stop correcting your professors.

There's a reason he/she has a PhD and you don't. Guaranteed the man/woman is more knowledgeable than you are on whatever subject he/she is teaching. Guaranteed. If you want to have a spelling-bee style face-off with this professor to see who knows more about the subject, you'll lose way before they get to that hard phonetic crap. It's like Afghanistan against the U.S. You have no chance. Oh, they actually got something wrong? Well here's a tip: they're only human. If your professor never once gets an answer wrong, spells something wrong, or makes a mistake about the facts he/she is a robot. Most of us have learned to accept that they're fallible, but there's always got to be someone in the class who thinks that he's morally superior when he puts up his hand and says, "Um, professor? I think there's a 't' in 'culture.'" And then he sits back with a smug little grin on his face like he scored the winning point in a tennis match. Do you really want to be that guy?



opinion

PEOPLE OF THE SUN

The Zapatista movement is still going strong. The editors explain why the Herald decided to publish Marcos's open letter despite risk of Leftie branding.

While we have long abstained from filling the pages of this newspaper with topics that are universally considered "left-wing" so as to keep the journalistic integrity of this campus rag intact, we have recently realized that ignoring unjust subjects for this reason is equally as narrow-minded as those who wouldn't read the article for the same reason. We present to you one of the latest letters from the eloquent and decidedly leftist Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos. If you have never heard of the elusive Mr. Marcos then you have definitely never heard of the state of Chiapas in Mexico and the war being waged there. Herewith is a brief rundown of the reasons that keep the members of Marcos's group, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, or simply the Zapatistas, from backing down from the internal revolution they commenced in 1994.

Mexico's literacy rate is 87%. Chiapas' is 69%. In Mexico, 79% of households have running water. In Chiapas, 58%. In Mexico, 88% of households have access to electricity. In Chiapas, 67%. 72% of children do not complete the 1st grade. Of 3.5 million people in the state, 1.5 million lack access to medical care. 54% of the population are malnourished. The RAND corporation, a right-wing think-tank, says that "In nearly 15 percent of the Chiapas's 111 municipalities, over 70% of the population lack electricity, drainage, or toilets. One index of marginalization shows that 85% of the population lives in a desperate condition."¹ With 70,000 soldiers now permanently stationed in Chiapas, the presence of the army is characterized by "constant threats, thefts, rapes, unauthorized detentions, and constant intimidation through incursions into territories and regions, which place many indigenous communities in a permanent situation of insecurity and terror. Zapatista leaders are jailed. Paramilitaries linked to the army are active, and commit human rights violations in a "situation of generalized impunity."²

On January 1, 1994 the Zapatistas staged a surprise rebellion and won some initial successes. They were soon forced to retreat into the Lacondón jungle when the troops came to occupy the state. The Zapatista army has honored a cease fire agreement with the Mexican government. It has concentrated not on building a force with many weapons, and advanced training, but on organizing and reaching out—to villagers, to Mexicans outside of Chiapas, to the rest of the world. One Zapatista statement says "We do not wish to seize power but to exercise it."

This is the word of Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos:

The globalization of power has demonstrated throughout the world that it has entered its most aggressive stage by making military war its primary weapon of domination. Nonetheless, the attack against the people of Iraq not only bore witness to globalization's true destructive nature, but it also provoked the greatest worldwide condemnation in the history of humanity. Despite the fallen statues, worldwide resistance and rebellion have been maintained and are growing. The zapatista rebellion is just one small part of the great demonstration of human dignity throughout the planet. In our country, the Mexican political class (which includes all registered political parties and the three branches of the Union) betrayed the hope of millions of Mexicans, and of thousands of persons from other countries, of seeing the rights and culture of the Indian peoples of Mexico constitutionally recognized. A short time ago, Mexican politicians, completely distanced from reality, gave an excellent demonstration of their unlimited capacity or the ridiculous, by holding one of the most comical election campaigns in Mexican history. The high absenteeism in the July 6 elections was a popular reaction which they are still refusing to recognize.

In response to all of this, the EZLN has decided to completely suspend any contact with the Mexican federal government and the political parties, and the zapatista peoples have reaffirmed that resistance is their primary means of struggle. In both communiqués which were released by members of the CCRI-CG of the EZLN this January 1 in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, we zapatistas reiterated our status as rebels. We also announced that, despite the stupidity and blindness of Mexican politicians, the so-called "San Andrés Accords on Indigenous Rights and Culture" (signed by the federal government and the EZLN on February 16, 1996 and expressed in the so-called "Cocopá Law") will be put into practice in rebel territories.

On that occasion, we zapatistas also reiterated our right to express solidarity with the just struggles of the people of Mexico and of the world. This was in response to those who demanded that we limit ourselves to the indigenous issue in Mexico. We expressed our support, at the world level, for Venezuelan sovereignty, for the people of Iraq and for all those struggles in resistance against the power of money. We expressed our support in Mexico for those primarily indigenous brothers and sisters who are resisting throughout the country.

To those brothers and sisters, in Mexico and throughout the world, who have had relationships regarding projects or correspondence with the rebel zapatista Autonomous Municipalities, and to those, in Mexico and throughout the world, who have addressed the EZLN to request our word and/or participation in different international initiatives against the globalization of power, we are asking for your patience and understanding. Until such time as these changes are announced and have become operative, we shall not be able to give them the attention they deserve.

That is all... for now.





opinion

An Open Letter to Ikea

This is the actual transcript of a letter composed by one angry former Ikea customer to her former supplier of do-it-yourself furniture. Innis College student Amy Yu has had it up to here with the multinational from Sweden and, after reading her letter airing her grievances to the company, you'll be angry too.

I can honestly say that I have never experienced worse customer service than from the Ikea Company within the last month. Before moving to Toronto for the beginning of the academic year, I placed my fateful furniture request with your shop-by-phone service sometime around 22 August 2003 and was promised a delivery date of 8 September 2003.

By 7 September, I had not received any phone confirmation regarding suitable delivery times for the next day as the shop-by-phone voice had assured me. After calling the Ikea in question, I found out that my order had been "cancelled" without my knowledge. The representative stated that I had to wait another three weeks for my order to be reinstated.

Seeing that I was starting classes within the week, I decided to go directly to your Vaughn store to order "next day delivery" of the items. I gave your cashier my "reserve slip" and also picked out my other furniture. (May I add that your employees at Ikea Vaughan were unacceptably rude, unhelpful, and brisk. I don't have time to elaborate on that one.) I paid the \$59 delivery fee and gave the attendant my American Express card in order to be completely reimbursed.

That night, I received a phone call from Ikea Vaughan notifying me that they in fact did not have the Pax Wardrobe doors and that they would have to be backordered. The disjunction between your stores is atrocious. This meant that we had driven all the way to Vaughan for no reason, wasting our valuable time and money.

That's not all. Over a week later, Ikea Vaughan finally called back and I assured the representative that I would be home between 1 and 5 p.m. in order to receive the backordered Pax Wardrobe door delivery. The next day, as I was getting ready to leave for a lab session, at precisely 8:40 a.m. a Purolator deliveryman rang my doorbell and told me I had two large packages waiting in his truck. I later found out that the packages were most likely from Montreal and were remnants of my "cancelled" shop-by-phone order. Finally, I AGAIN called the shop-by-phone line, whose representative apologized and asked if it was "okay" if they sent Purolator to pick it up.

Sadly, it does not end there. I had arranged for a 1.30 to 4.30pm time window for Purolator to come to my condo and pick up the mistaken packages. At 4.35p.m., after waiting for over three hours, no one had come to claim the wayward doors. So I called my good friends at the shop-by-phone line and angrily told them about the situation. The dismembered voice on the other line was stupefied by the situation but definitely "felt bad". Left with no recourse but threats as my anger management was about to break, I demanded to speak to the customer service manager. But I was totally rebuffed and denied access to the apparently too-busy-for-customers customer service manager.

In the meantime, my credit card has been held hostage. On the same day, when sifting through the mail, I discovered another bill from Ikea. It turned out that they had charged me for the mistaken packages – funny that they were so prompt with the bill sending but could not get their act together to reclaim the actual product. This time I was not going to take any more guff and demanded to speak to the customer service manager. I was promised a call back that night. I am still waiting to speak to her.

On a final note, I did indeed call Purolator since it was clear that nothing was going to get solved if I left it up to the shop-by-phone voice or her invisible manager. It turns out that not only did they not come twice as your representative told me they had, they had not come at all.

In total, I have wasted EIGHTEEN HOURS waiting for your various delivery and recall people because of the extra Pax door backorder, the mix-up with your shop-by-phone accounts, and the various Purolator mishaps. Ikea should be ashamed of its inefficiency in tracking customer needs, calls, item stock, and orders. My experience with Ikea has been stressful, frustrating, and time-consuming. I strongly believe that there should be some sort of compensation for this terrible customer service. If I had known your company was so misinformed among its different components, I would have at once directed all my business to Sears.

Amy Yu,
Last-Time Ikea Shopper

arts & entertainment.

I blame Elliot

Michele Costa justifies her spending habits by handing blame to a chubby little alien and his red-sweatered human chum.

When I was a child, I used to shoplift. I used to grab candy from those displays near the checkouts in Shoppers Drug Mart at the mall near my house. Not just any candy, but good old Reece's Pieces. Always. No M&M's, no Skittles, always Reece's Pieces; I loved them, I wanted them, and I had no doubt in my mind that despite the rows and rows of candy options in front of me, the Reece's Pieces were the superior choice. Despite the fact that my mom always made me go back and apologize while she paid for my already-opened orange box of goodness, I did this every single time. I just never realized why. Strangely enough, a few nights ago, I woke up in the middle of the night and had the answer. And oh it explained so much!

When I think back to my childhood I really only have clear memories of watching 2 movies. The first is *Batteries Not Included*, a film that no one except me seems to recall these days. The other is *E.T.* I loved *E.T.* I remember seeing it at the drive-in of all places with my parents as a 5 year old, I remember it being the first VHS movie we owned when we bought a VCR; and I remember owning *E.T.* tumbler glasses from the gas station, and a stuffed alien from Toys R Us. It left such a strong impression on me that it pretty much defines 1980's movies in my mind.

E.T. is almost always considered one of the most important films of the last few decades, the reasons for which vary. It's one of the last innocent films of make-believe for a generation that believed in it all, it touched drastically on society's rising feeling that science was perhaps treading too far into human life, and of course, it introduced the world to the wonder of Drew Barrymore. Also, a reason more recently and widely discussed: it is generally agreed to be the first major appearance of corporate product placement in widely successful media. Reece's Pieces soared in sales and popularity, and directly onto the top of my childhood must-haves list. Strangely though, Elliot using Reece's Pieces to lure *E.T.* into his human world, and my high preference for the candy after falling in love with the film, is not a connection that I ever recall making in the least as a child. I can only now wonder just how much it determined of the rest of my life. This, you see, is how I justify my frequent shopping beyond my limits by accepting that it's not my fault; it's clearly Elliot's!

Can I be held accountable when I do half my Christmas 2001 shopping at the newly opened Eaton Center Pottery Barn after an entire episode of *Friends*, (paid for by the company of course) is dedicated to Rachel and Phoebe's obsession with shopping at the home decoration wonderland? No! Similarly, is it my fault that when I watch *Sex and the City*, I want Manolo Blahnik Mary Janes, hot pink Dolce and Gabbana feathered stilettos, and even a hot pink vibrator with rabbit ears, or when I buy the J.Lo perfume before I even know what it smells like? No, it's Elliot's of course (Or at least Steven Spielberg's)! Just as I was forgiven for being a naive city-raised girl when I thought baby corn was simply real corn packed into tiny molds, I feel I am forgiven for being unable to resist the shiny sparkly offerings of mainstream media since, just as I wasn't raised anywhere near a country farm, I also didn't grow up near any movies that weren't packed with corporate products waiting to tempt me with their beauty or peanut butter filling.

"Suddenly, it was February, and I realized I hadn't left the res in four months, except for pizza and class."

Don't let this happen to you. **Get involved!**

Submissions

please send all submissions to heraleditors@yahoo.com

upcoming deadlines are
Monday, October 20th and Monday, November 17th

*reviews, opinions, features, short stories, poetry, manifestos, (WORDS),
line drawings, comics, photography, (BLACK AND WHITE IMAGES)*



arts & entertainment.

T.I.F.F...

Elephant

Directed by Gus Van Sant

Everyone has had their explanations for why the Columbine disaster happened. Many, if not all, were incredibly narrow, and sometimes downright ridiculous and superficial. Michael Moore made a breakthrough film in which he attempted to document the incident by looking at the bigger picture through the cultural context that all American high school students must exist within. Van Sant, director of *My Own Private Idaho*, *Good Will Hunting* and others, decided to take a different approach, by creating a film in which all cultural pretenses and dramatic conventions are thrown out the window. The result is not only shocking and nauseating, but also frighteningly real and surprisingly beautiful. Through a series of incredibly long takes, with the primary use of tracking shots, several students are followed through the school on the day that two of them decide to start a massacre with mail-order weapons. Through real-time, everything and everyone gets equal presence, from the handsome, good-natured jock, to the dorky library girl, to the three bulimic friends, to the two killers themselves. Explanations are hinted at; for instance the one killer tells one of the teachers he "should*ve been nicer to kids", but are so superficial they only amount to a criticism of packaged answers. While one of the boys plays a violent video game, the other one plays...uh, Beethoven. When any of the students try to make a final comment while at gunpoint, they are shot mid-sentence. The result is a painful and desperate search for the enlightenment that comes from tragedy, followed by the sick realization that Van Sant gives us none, other than perhaps a horrifying statement about the banality of true loss. Stunning.

JOEL ELLIOT



Elephant



Kazuyoshi Kumakiri

Antenna (Kazuyoshi Kumakiri)

Matthew Lau extends the Herald's *antennae* into Antenna.

Kazuyoshi Kumakiri's *Antenna* is a movie about the problem of loss, the reality of suffering, and confrontation with pain. Based on a bestselling novel of the same name, the story circles around a family whose young daughter, Marie, went missing almost a decade ago. Though it is never revealed how the incident shattered the family, we are presented with the pieces that were left: a father who died from grief, an unstable mother who immures herself in superstitious and religious practices, a young brother who suffers from a psychological disorder, and Yuichiro, our protagonist, who moves away from the family as an escape. The intensity of the pain of loss metaphorically ruptured the antennae of each member of the family, damaging their sensitivity, perception and feelings. We watch as they struggle to overcome it.

Rather symbolically, Yuichiro becomes a student of philosophy in college, especially the philosophy of pain. To explore the way in which people approach pain, he begins to visit and observe the work of Naomi, a prostitute and sadomasochist. Eventually, Naomi becomes Yuichiro's personal psychiatrist as he attempts to reconcile himself with a repressed childhood in which he encountered pedophilia, suicide and incest.

Kumakiri makes heavy use of imagery in the movie. In a hallucination sequence, Yuichiro, who has always felt guilty and blamed himself for Marie's disappearance, hopelessly watches as he chokes Marie to death. There are also scenes in which a hurt and angry Yuichiro tries to relieve himself by submerging himself into water in the bathtub and cutting himself. In one-way or another, that is how the family has dealt with its pain: by hiding from the world and self-abusing.

An abandoned hydro-tower behind Yuichiro's house becomes a recurring symbol in the movie. The tower draws intense curiosity from the family and, as the movie proceeds, it would become the object that various family members – abandoned and deprived of power themselves – strive to conquer.

Shot mainly with close-ups, *Antenna* pushes the audience very proximately to the scenes and characters. The long-takes and the lack of sufficient actions and dialogue to fill each scene accentuate the tension and powerlessness that the family experiences. The desolation is further heightened by with the use of lighting, the score – or the lack thereof – and the occasional stroke of pathetic fallacy: sometimes, there is only silence, only darkness, only rain.

In the very last scene of the movie, we see Yuichiro and his younger brother hammering holes to a wall that they are trying to knock down for the renovation of the house. In a way, *Antenna* is about a similar quest to knock down a wall: the wall of confinement, the wall of guilt, the wall of pain. Though the wall still stands at the end of the movie, no doubt Yuichiro is learning to hammer holes into it.

arts & entertainment.

Lost in Translation

Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson star in this melancholy masterpiece about the fragility of human emotion. Masterfully conducted by Sophia Coppola (*The Virgin Suicides*), Murray stars as Bob Harris, an aging American film star filming a whisky commercial in Tokyo. Johansson plays Charlotte, the introspective, young wife of a hotshot photographer in Tokyo to shoot a rock band. Bob and Charlotte meet in the bar of their hotel having drifted together out of their mutual insomnia, and connect with such an intense and immediate intimacy, words cannot do it justice. Their experiences are all at once dissimilar and identical. Increasingly aware of his stagnating and somewhat meaningless career, and frustrated with his floundering marriage, Bob is afflicted by a midlife crisis. Youthful and intelligent Charlotte, suffers from a similar kind of crisis, that of the directionless twenty-something. Amidst the neon-lit atmosphere of Tokyo, *Lost in Translation* is a film about the dislocation of identity and purpose, the search for meaning and human connection. Despite their differences, Charlotte and Bob connect as if something deep inside each of them instinctively recognizes its counterpart in the other. The film's ending leaves their budding romance unconsummated but provides a deeper intimacy, transcending traditional notions of love and romance and satisfying the human need for connection. Compelling, honest, and appropriately vague, *Lost in Translation* breaths fresh air into the human experience. JENNIFER SCOTT

CINSSU represents and High Times Mag.
Potluck
the new comedy
Oct. 16, 9pm,
@
Innis Town Hall
2 Sussex Ave., etc., etc.
"It's high art, man!"

Coffee and Cigarettes

For the premiere of his first film in four years, Jim Jarmusch brought along Meg White, Cate Blanchett, and Iggy Pop—easily the best special guests of this year's festival, though Iggy alone would've justified the claim. There's not much point in trying to separate the film from Jarmusch's well-selected circle of friends; one of the chief pleasure of *Coffee and Cigarettes* is to see unlikely pairs of cultural icons collide. Tom Waits lying wildly and growing increasingly defensive in response to Iggy's Midwestern earnestness is a definite highlight; in another segment, RZA and GZA lecture a caffeine-addled Bill Murray on the benefits of the holistic medicine. The film is an anthology composed of ten black-and-white shorts filmed over the past two decades, and the film works as a timeline of Jarmusch's career, as cast and crew members from his previous features are involved in the production of the shorts—there is also some new material, featuring the White Stripes and Cate Blanchette, who plays both herself and her cousin. Much like *Night on Earth* and not unlike any of his other features, *Coffee and Cigarettes* centers on those moments that carry no inherent dramatic meaning, and Jarmusch isn't too keen on changing the nature of the situation—topics of conversation range from the discoveries of Nicola Tesla to genealogy to the band Sqirl (you wouldn't get them), though they all tend to come back to coffee and cigarettes. Insofar as the film is relentlessly focused on the minutia of everyday life, it lends symmetry to a career that began with the sublimely inconsequential *Stranger Than Paradise*. PAUL MONTICONE

T.I.F.F...

Save the Green Planet

Written and directed by Jang Jun-Hwan

South Korea is slowly coming into its own on the international scene as this year's Toronto Film Festival showcased strong and exciting talents from the country. A total of five South Korean films were featured, including *A Good Lawyer's Wife*, which competed in the Venice Film Festival earlier this year, and *Memories of Murder*, a smash hit that beat *Matrix Reloaded* in the Korean market. But the most sterling work of this year's batch was *Save the Green Planet* by first-time director Jang Jun-hwan.

Byung-goo (Shin Ha-Gyun) appears to be a humble beekeeper. He still gets bullied by a former high school classmate and lives far away from town in the mountains with his equally gentle girlfriend Soon-yi (Hwang Jung-min). But he is the only person who is willing to save the world from the aliens of Andromeda. He kidnaps Mr. Kang (Baek Yoon-sik), the president of a chemical company, believing that he is a spy from Andromeda. Locking him up in the basement, Byung-goo starts to torture him in his naïve effort to "save the green planet." To block off Mr. Kang's ability to communicate with other aliens, Byung-goo first shaves off Mr. Kang's head, then peels the skin from his feet. But Byung-goo is not as crazy as he appears to be. As the story unfolds the viewer begins to see him as a sad, brooding monster whose pain and sorrow blur the boundary between reality and fantasy.

On the surface *Save the Green Planet* belongs to a stream of campy B-movies, complete with an electric torture chair and quirky devices such as helmets with radars. But it is also a film for film buffs, filled with references to other sci-fi classics such as *2001: A Space Odyssey*. If one looks at it closely, *Save the Green Planet* is a cunning and brilliant explosion of genres. Swinging confidently between slapstick comedy, science fiction and serious drama, Jang provides a fast-paced film with unpredictable turns right up to the closing scene. His meticulous sense of detail in Byung-goo's basement torture room subtly suggests Byung-goo's mental instability. The rock re-mix of *Over the Rainbow* is an apt underscore which further darkens the mood.

Jang's characters are also genuine and complex. At the end we view Byung-goo and Mr. Kang with both sympathy and horror. Jang is helped by a stellar cast who take risks to portray some of the most extreme characters that have ever graced the screen. Shin is a young actor of impressive range. As Byung-goo he demonstrates his ability to deliver whatever the role calls for whether it is deadpan comic flair or dramatic pathos. Baek Yoon-sik, a veteran of stock Korean melodramas, gives a brave comic performance as Mr. Kang, enduring such bizarre physical tortures such as having antiseptic dabbed on his skinned feet. Hwang Jung-min brings tenderness to her role as Soon-yi, willing to conspire with Byung-goo and refusing to release their prisoner even though she is clearly moved by Mr. Kang's suffering.

It is interesting to note that, despite Korean critics' enthusiastic approval, *Save the Green Planet* was a major flop in its domestic market when it was released in spring. No doubt its tendency towards the strange appalled many moviegoers. Luckily it has gained international acclaim since then, winning best director at the Moscow International Film Festival and best picture at the Puchon International Fantastic Film Festival. Jung crafted a true original, captivating the imagination of serious filmgoers. *Save the Green Planet* shows that South Korea is on its way to getting the international attention that it deserves. AHREUM HAN

more film fest on the next page>

arts & ent

"a gust of propellers"
by Olaf Brave

a backdrop of neverending

questions

they rise again and again
along with the lump in my throat

a bellyache for answers

night terrors
knowing there are none
or I will never find

the result is still the same:

I wish you would whisper to me at night
so we could be done with all of this
I could lie back at ease
an orgasm of finality

but instead you send me
propellers swirling from the sky
each bearing a seed to seed

ripened ovaries
but bearing no fruit toward
my fruitless strain

What else can I do?

* * *

* * *

a perfect design
molded in brown plantcoat
wafer thin
hard brown veins
a fortress right beside
protecting your future

you always land right side up
you flip in the air to make sure of it
Who thought of that?

I like to think survival is a good enough
reason for this perfect perfect design.
But it just doesn't. Doesn't.

This is excruciatingly beautiful,
but it has no answers.
Only questions questions questions.

I grip and cling to bare experience.

These things rise again and again.

I need to accept them,
or else they will forever overrun.



photo: gillian cerbu



photo: vanessa meadu

ertainment.

Heart and Mind
By Felipe Prusak

Why are heart and mind such separated twins?
In hopeless thoughts the requisition grows.
These feelings nothing more than empty dreams
From bloody tools without the means to think.

And though I can't conjoin the rival two
I know the role veracity must play.
So why tonight do in my head repeat
The thoughtless thoughts that are delusion's dream.



photo: gillian cerbu

arts & entertainment.

why's everybody gotta be all up in my grill?

a pasting of the pastiche of "hip" culture

by Paul Egan

So you're standing around, drinking a glass of Chateau Haut-Gleon amidst the bedazzling likes of contemporary stardom, ritzy the Rhine in a certain sense, and you suddenly realize: "I could do this for a living!" At least this was my reaction to a schmoozing party betwixt fashion extravaganza and film fest foray - a veritable illusory world on both fronts...

And so it is that I unfold my scheme to conquer the world of *fashion* and *style* and in so doing, elaborate the great divide that has forever been glossed over between the two. This column will attempt to elucidate some comments that I am repeatedly faced with while strutting my ass along campus. Question after question, judgment after ridicule - it's always the same, "Paul, you're such a whore for fashion!"



(The author and his god-dess at the Coco Chanel party....
Kim Catrall's on the left)

My response: it's not fashion, you pop-peasant - it's style! There is a very real distinction here, kiddies.

First off, let's take a look at the history of fashion and its contemporary manifestation. Initially, fashion was the art of a designer. The disparate nature of each individual design was intentional. The design of a single piece was the investment of every mental stimulation that could be induced to accentuate the specific garment being weaved. The seed was sown for haute-couture as an implementation of artful design for the one to be wearing it and that individual alone. In other words, it was a little gift from Christian Dior to you (Thanks hunny, you always had my heart.). In this sense, one can understand the *raison-d'être* of haute-couture's assault upon the pocket book - it's as though Pollock used you as a canvas for a drip. You'd be an original (undoubtedly considered the epitome of pretense).

Dolce, Prada, Gucci - each line is a compendium of ideas. In some instances a multiplicity of designers combine efforts to set a foot upon the invisible runway of the industry.

This is not to say the originary ideal of fashion as art has not carried through - have you looked at Marc Jacob's summer line? It is simply the affect of affluent culture's interest in the *signification* of haut-couture.

The same argument has been laid against "fine art" - it is only the select few of the 'bourgeois' that can afford the beauty. It is the new intrigue in what meaning is attributed (connotatively) to designer fabrics that has spawned the boom in design industry and its negative reception from some.

"Once again, ugly protestors are bothering beautiful people."

Despite my coy recognition of these lines and their fabulous craftsmanship, the industry carries with it many connotations we're all familiar with - the superficiality of (assumed) beauty; the exploitative nature of the modeling world; the lack of content that the fashion world harbors beneath its banner of the formal, etc. The familiarity with these negative topoi demonstrates the degree of superficiality emanating from a different side of the fashion/anti-fashion front - the typifying of the industry as superficial negates the aesthetic quality of what is actually at issue here. Designer clothing in many senses is not to be viewed as commodity - it is art. Once again, we take what has previously existed as something creative, vibrant as yet another artifact up for grabs in the economy of exchange.

It is here that I would like to attend to the second and more important line of reasoning that this column will employ - that of style. The designs of Dior and Prada are unattainable for most. I can only have dreams where Coco Chanel transcends time to show me the tweed jacket in its conception. It is the very aesthetic creations that these designers offer unto the world as art that we should appreciate. It is the influence that they have upon our way of seeing beauty in the world and in human creation.

Enter Style here, children.

Style is the aesthetic sensibility that one inclines towards in their self-perception and choice of self-representation. Style is the suggestive quality taken from haute-couture and applied in one's personal design project that some people prefer to call "getting dressed". I prefer my term. When I shop, I go vintage, I go affordable, but I go sensibly into the realm of self-representation without an eye for cultural signification (ideologically/class-oriented symbolism) but with an eye of intrigue in turning clothing into self-representation in aesthetic terms.

Here at the Herald we have been anxiously thinking of how to get more submissions and we came up with a solution: bribes. Pure and simple bribes. Do you want men? women? dubloons? Then submit. We promise to give you plenty of reasons to smile. See, at the Herald, we're all about you!

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Monday

Nicole Polivka, Assistant Editor: 12pm - 2pm

Alice Kim, Internal Officer: 3pm - 5pm

Tuesday

Stephanie Silverman, Editor: 1:30pm - 3:30pm

Thursday

Corey Katz, Editor: 3pm - 5pm

Friday

Stephen Hutchison, Assistant Editor: 1pm - 3pm

arts & entertainment.

The Brown Bunny

T.I.F.F...

While the Toronto International Film Festival placed a significant number of controversial films on display, perhaps no film was so shrouded with notoriety as Vincent Gallo's second directorial work, *The Brown Bunny*. Shown at the Cannes Film Festival in an unedited, 2-hour form, *The Brown Bunny* was booed by its French audience and uniformly condemned by international critics, with American journalist Roger Ebert going so far as to call the movie "the worst film ever to grace the screen at Cannes." The only critics to like the movie were the French arts journalists, which, as Vincent Gallo sardonically remarked, "only put salt in the wounds." It was therefore with some trepidation – and considerably cajoling by his friends – that this reviewer stepped into the Elgin Theatre to catch the final showing of *The Brown Bunny*.

It should immediately be noted that the version of *The Brown Bunny* that played at the Toronto Festival was not the same as the one that played in Cannes. Following the violently negative reaction of both audiences and critics to his work, Gallo pared the film down from 2 hours to 80 minutes, a step that this reviewer suspects may have rendered the movie watchable. On its initial showing in Toronto, the new and improved version of *The Brown Bunny* was given a much more positive reception than at Cannes, with Gallo and actress Chloe Sevigny staying for what one source described as "a thirty minute love-in with the audience."

The plot of *The Brown Bunny* is fairly simple. Gallo portrays a taciturn motorbike racer who travels from the eastern United States to California, along the way trying to forget the love of his life, Daisy, from whom, for reasons not explained until the film's conclusion, he has become estranged. During his journey, Gallo's character makes various feeble attempts at human interaction, all of which seem to be crushed by the emotional weight of Gallo's own guilt and reticence. If Gallo's directorial debut, *Buffalo '66*, is a post-modern retelling of the romantic film, then *The Brown Bunny* is likewise a post-modern revision of the road trip film.

While Gallo is by no means an expert filmmaker, he does bring a certain stylistic artistry to his directing. The movie is filmed digitally and employs a few techniques of interest. A unique nuance is the camera's perspective of looking out onto the road from the windshield, on which dirt, blemishes and other partial obstructions are completely visible, and through which the light hits the camera as one imagines it would hit the eye of the driver; in this way, Gallo attempts to invite the viewer to experience his character's journey. Gallo also cleverly intermixes technique with theme, such as by effectively using wide-open spaces to emphasize the loneliness of his character; it is interesting that the more beautiful are Gallo's surroundings, the more acutely pronounced seems to be his character's agony. Particularly notable is the way in which Gallo thumbs his nose at movie conventions and purposely defies the viewer's expectations. In one short scene, Gallo's character leaves his van to buy a coke, drinks some of it, engages in a passionate kiss with a strange woman and then immediately retreats to his car and drives away, the character whom he had just kissed never reappearing in the film. The scene drew uproarious laughter from the audience of which this reviewer was a part, no doubt because it follows a sequence of events so contrary to the contemporary manner of screenwriting. While such a style might seem opaque to some viewers, this writer finds Gallo's iconoclasm to be at least worthy of quixotic admiration.

Two primary themes seem to emerge from *The Brown Bunny*: sexual frustration and guilt. The former mounts as the movie progresses – one cannot help but notice phallic imagery in Gallo's profession as a motorbike racer, especially when he derives some relief partway through his journey by simply riding his bike in an open space – with the movie ultimately culminating with a lengthy and highly explicit scene of sexuality close to the film's end. Part of the film's negative reception can no doubt be ascribed to the explicitness of this scene, and the generosity with which Gallo photographs a prosthetic version of a certain appendage. The extent to which the latter theme – guilt – affects Gallo's character can only be properly understood in the context of the film's unexpected conclusion; a better understanding of what Gallo set out to accomplish might therefore be gained by a second viewing of the film.

Despite the positive commentary contained in this review, readers should not be of the impression that *The Brown Bunny* is by any stretch of the imagination a masterpiece or a perfect film. While many of Gallo's techniques are unique, uniqueness does not necessarily carry a film or hold its audience's attention; certain sequences can therefore become tedious, a problem that was no doubt greatly amplified in the original 2 hour Cannes version. At one strategic moment of the film a member of the audience yawned very loudly. While the sexually explicit nature of the film's sex scene did not offend this writer, many other viewers will no doubt be thoroughly scandalized by it. Perhaps *The Brown Bunny*'s greatest flaws, however, lie with its screenwriting decisions, most particular with regards to the way in which information is revealed to the viewer. Though it might be argued that preserving the mystery of the main character's situation prevents the movie from descending into melodrama, it also deprives the viewer of the full emotional impact of the film for most of its duration; in this sense, it is both lacks narrative clarity and

evocativeness. The singularity, moreover, with which *The Brown Bunny* focuses on Gallo's character leaves the film completely bereft of the sort of on-screen intrigue, or even stimuli, which audiences might otherwise have found entertaining. The lack of any significant supporting character in the film contributes to its occasional tediousness and obtuseness.

While by no means a perfect film, *The Brown Bunny* is undeserving of the vitriolic criticism leveled at it by film critics. Despite its various flaws, *The Brown Bunny* is in many ways a unique and artistic film, two aspects for which it deserves praise and by which it is set apart from other, more commercial films. Many filmmakers try simply to make money; Vincent Gallo, for better or for worse, tried to make art. **STEPHEN HUTCHINSON**



Vincent Gallo



arts & entertainment.

Fog of War/ Dogville

When one thinks of statesmen of the twentieth century who should be shamed in front of a camera and made accountable for their actions, Robert S. McNamara should come to mind. The conventional wisdom on McNamara is that, as Secretary of Defense under Kennedy and Johnson, he was a heartless bureaucrat unwilling to recognize the Vietnam War's failure and directly responsible for the deaths of thousands, and, for *The Fog of War*, Errol Morris managed to get the man himself to talk about his actions. Recently declassified archival recordings calls the popular portrayal of McNamara into question, but the film and McNamara himself focus on his culpability in even more troubling actions. McNamara frankly admits his statistical analysis led to General Curtis LeMay's policy of firebombing Japanese cities—killing over 100,000 Tokyo civilians in a single night—for which he states that both men "were behaving as war criminals."

Accompanying this admission is an accelerating montage of planes efficiently dropping tons of ammunition on the toy cities below, with superimposed US-city population comparisons; this is mass produced destruction. What is ultimately most stunning about McNamara's actions is that he approached war as he approached running Ford Motor Company, caught up in system of cost-benefit analysis—numbers, variables, and flowcharts—yet he hardly seems oblivious to the humanity that's been laid to waste as a result of his actions. *The Fog of War* is a compelling survey of American foreign policy over the past half-century, and its critique extends into the present moment: war is something beyond the human mind's ability to understand, yet at its center are human beings, by turns perceptive, blinded, defensive, and contrite. (JS)

T.I.F.F.../Music

Just when we were getting to the point where I couldn't help but make a game of guessing who would be the first character to rape our heroine, Lars von Trier makes *Dogville*. Though Grace (Nicole Kidman), refugee from pursuing gangsters, certainly receives her martyr's share of abuse, humiliation, and routine violation at the hands of the citizens of *Dogville*, she ends up neither dead nor institutionalized. Since it would be no fun to spoil the ending, suffice to say Bowie's "Young Americans," which plays over the closing credits, feels nastily appropriate and even somewhat true, certainly more so than the all-star cast of terrible townsfolk who, in a way, provide the twisted conclusion, and herein lies the problem with the film. With the sole exception of Tom Edison (Paul Bettany), the town's resident philosopher, and his elaborate self-justification for his eventual betrayal of Grace, these people couldn't have been more misanthropically rendered if this were a Kubrick film; it's as naively cynical and reductive in portraying a mythic or symbolic America as Michael Moore at his worst. Taken as a critique of American society, *Dogville* feels as muddled as its detractors have claimed; as the new entry in von Trier's oeuvre, another tale of woman's horrible misfortunes, it's a progressive step forward. This negative assessment fails to consider the interplay of the intimate, stripped-down aesthetic—performance and character interaction are privileged by the bare stage setting—and the various distancing effects employed, including self-referential chapter-headings and John Hurt's pseudo-Masterpiece Theater narration. How exactly von Trier's stylistic playfulness inflects the film's politics is unclear, and ultimately leaves *Dogville* one of the most frustrating films of this year's festival. (PM)

Moving Away From the Pulsebeat – The Island Experience

Hello Björk. It's been awhile since we last saw you. We've been waiting 22 months and 26 days, precisely. What have you been doing with yourself since then? We've heard you've gone and had yourself a baby. I admit that's a rather good excuse for not having put out a new album or having starred in another devastating film. But anyhow, if you didn't know, we've missed you. We paid our \$70; we got onto a nice ferry-boat; we ate peanut-butter sandwiches on a lovely lawn and waited to catch a glimpse of you. Some lucky girls at a clothing store glimpsed you yesterday. They kept straight faces as they sold you a belt but you didn't see them go into hysterics the moment the door swung closed behind you. Do you realise the effect you have on people? Even cuddly Kid Koala was blushing more than usual as he wanned up your already-ardent crowd. I suppose you must have some idea, standing in front of all these people, how much they adore you. Not only standing, but singing, and dancing in your too-cute aerobics-inspired way.

After 22 months and 26 days of nervous fidgeting, it's hard to know what to expect from you, Björk. Last time there was a choir of Inuit girls (with a throat singer, naturally), a full symphonic orchestra and the lovely harpist Zeena Parkins. Manipulating the beats were your two techno-geek buddies, Matmos. I sometimes like to imagine the three of you sitting at home, conjuring up songs on your laptops, and then playing Space Invaders on your coffee break. Could there be a happier place on earth than your rec room? But seriously, my dear, this time you managed to top the Inuit throat singer. You're incredible.

First you come out in this green outfit that won't help all those pixie rumours. Jumping around, looking sneakily at all 9,000 of us, you launched into a set that some might describe as dazzling. The first time the fireworks went off, only 15 minutes in, I have to admit I got excited. Exploding in bright colours high over the stage, they went off boom boom boom like ultra revved-up Dolby bass in my headphones. 'Emotional landscapes,' indecd! When the song was finished, we had no more questions about where our money went. And yet, only a few songs later out came the fireworks again! Boy, you're full of surprises! And, we were wondering, where did you learn to dodge those jets of fire that exploded up from the stage? Then we remember you're from Iceland, nation of geysers and who knows what else. Your show continued with more pyrotechnics and dancing, and those videos starring alien embryo-fish and other zygomatic creatures. Just when we thought the spectacle was nearly over, you reprised your fire-jumping ways, giving us even more bang for our buck, and energizing us for the 90 minute wait for the fairy-boat home.

But seriously, by the look of the people around me, you can do no wrong.



photo stolen from: Thom Hamilton

arts & entertainment.

the boys of summer

The Ataris chat with Stephanie Silverman about the ups and downs of (near) fame

For around 8 years now, the Ataris has been a favourite among the pop-punk set. The band's sound is a mix of heartfelt screaming, lyrics of love lost and found, and guitars wailing over a steady, loud drumbeat. Recently, however, the Ataris left California-based independent Kung Fu Records – the label founded by punk rockers, the Vagrants, for other punk rockers that supported the Ataris through three albums, countless tours and singles, and through the treacherous world of being an "it" band – for a contract with the major label, Columbia Records. Moreover, the band has always prided themselves on the quality of their songs' content and their ability to speak directly to their fans. It is interesting therefore that not only have they left behind the label that broke them but also their ethic with the release of a cover (!!!) as their first single off the new album, So Long Astoria.

On more of a personal note, I found it hilarious that when the Ataris broke out "Boys of Summer" (the cover in question) towards the end of their set at Warped Tour, two girls who were standing beside me got really excited and exclaimed to each other: "Oh, it's THAT song!" This was after they'd already played their classic, "San Dimas High School Football Rules" and many other veritable independent hits. Fitting I suppose...

So there was much to talk about when former Varsity editor and longtime Chart Magazine contributor Keith Carman and I caught up with drummer Chris "Kid" Knapp after their set during the Barrie, Ontario stop of the Warped Tour-ing monolith. Herewith is our conversation and we leave it to you to decide whether the Ataris simply "outgrew" their independent roots or if they abandoned the ethic in order to make more money off Don Henley's back.

The Innis Herald: How's the Warped Tour been for you?

Knapp: Warped Tour's great. I love it. It couldn't be better today. Like our show today: it was pouring rain and it was in-sane! Every day is great. If I had my way, I would do this tour every other year for the rest of my life. D.I.Y. ethic is allowed to exist and grow and I love it!

The Innis Herald: There has been a lot of talk lately about your band's switch to a major label since you have been such adamant supporters of independent punk rock and the D.I.Y. ethic up until now. Do you have any guilt or feelings like you've let the scene down or "sold out"?

Knapp: No, not at all. We felt like we had taken Kung Fu as far as we could go. As a matter of fact, we completely outgrew it. We had a record contract... We did a split CD and we did our first record again and we gave them way more than we were supposed to and that's just because we love Kung Fu – if it weren't for them, then I wouldn't be here talking to you. But we had taken it as far as we could go. We definitely could not sell any more records without MTV and radio and we needed to get our records into K-Mart and Walmart and we needed a big label to do that... But the reason why we waited was that we waited for the right deal. And we're doing exactly what we always do and carrying it on to a major label.... We've been a band for 7 and a half years so we'd never let someone else dictate what we do or how we do it. We want to know what's going on, we want to be involved... We don't want to be one of these bands that comes [to Warped Tour] and gets told by a manager what to do and when to do it.

The Innis Herald: Were there different expectations either by the label or from you of yourselves when you put out So Long Astoria?

Knapp: [Columbia records' employees] sometimes don't understand "punk rock" and they don't understand why we think the way we do about certain things. A perfect example is the CD booklet with 16 pages. They go to tell us that every band makes an 8-page booklet: that's all you get just like Destiny's Child and Aerosmith. And we said, "We don't care. You see our contract?" We do what we want to do. We want a 16-page booklet – Kung Fu gave it to us! And we feel that the reason that we don't really care about downloading music is that our whole deal is the complete package. Kris takes a photograph to go along with every song and the lyrics go along with the photos to complete the package and we want to keep conveying that so that people buy our CDs and not just download our music... but it's hard to teach an old dog new tricks. But that's the deal we've stuck together: we've had our miscommunications: we didn't want Boys of Summer to be a single. We did not even want it on the record. But that's something they [Columbia Records] go after they pushed and pushed. And it got on the record. And the big radio stations in New York and L.A. started playing it and it caught wind and there's nothing you can do to stop it. Sometimes you know they're smarter than we are and sometimes we're smarter than them but, you know, as long as we feel that no one's compromising, then everything's OK.

The Innis Herald: How did you manage to retain at least some artistic control when dealing with the majors?

Knapp: Our credentials of a good 3–5 indie records that kick ass and a great fan base allowed us to negotiate on our own terms.



(continued on the next page)

arts & entertainment.

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The Innis Herald: Do you find the new record to be contradictory since you and [lead singer] Kris Roe have made repeated statements about it being not only emotionally-packed but also "straight-forward rock" and commercial? Further, there have been changes in the band's line-up and, obviously, the switch to Columbia. Isn't it hard to reconcile these very different views of music and the industry?

Knapp: It's not hard at all. I don't even think about it that way. There are songs that are about me on the record. Kris my singer is not an emotional person; he works out his bullshit with us [best friend; wife; daughter] through song and so after all of these years, I am used to it. But I have to say that it was fucked up and hard that he seemed like such an unemotional asshole yet then you realize he is gifted in giving his emotions in a different way. His own private emotions and the way he says them speaks to the world in a way. And that's the most amazing thing about him. And about our band I believe is the lyrics and that's what sets us apart from everyone else. You know, so many bands are writing pop jingles. Sometimes it's hard when writing a record to realize that Kris just wrote that song about me but then you get used to it....We're brothers; all four of us. At the end of the day, we'll hug each other and love each other but, yeah, it's hard.

The Innis Herald: Being on a major means a whole different level and style of marketing. All of a sudden kids who had never heard of you before are getting to know you because of your cover of someone else's song. Is it hard to deal with people who only know your new stuff and don't care about your history?

Knapp: It's really fucking hard. You know yesterday in Montreal especially I had something like 9 interviews and 8 of them were not even aware of anything but "Boys of Summer". It bugs the hell out of me. But this is why we signed once again; I gotta say to turn people on. But it's really hard when what's turning people on is a song you didn't write...I just try to explain that, "Look, this is where we came from, this is what we've done, we've worked really fucking hard". I tell people that we've been to Montreal 8 times before on tour and they have no fucking clue you know. Thank god Toronto is a lot more open-minded.



this photo was taken at warped tour, and yes, that's

"SHOW US TITS"

duct-taped to that Canadian flag... look for this picture in history books as chronicling the day punk died.

Rufio, Yellowcard, Lagwagon

Italo Aliaga discovers more than he was expecting at this pop-punk supershow in Toronto.

The night started out with a band called "Avoid One Thing"; unfortunately, we missed them but I heard nothing but good things about them, so props to them, and hopefully I'll be able to catch them in the future.

A few minutes after we got into the venue, Rufio took the stage. This young pop-punk band was a more than decent start to a great show. They ripped through hits such as "dipsh*t" and a dead-on cover of Madonna's "Like a Prayer" which was the obvious crowd-pleasing sing-a-long number. Overall, Rufio's set was tight but the best was yet to come with a band called Yellowcard.

I had never seen Yellowcard, although they came very highly recommended. I honestly went to see a Lagwagon show, but folks, I came back from a Yellowcard show. These guys stole the night. Their unique blend of emo (emotional punk music) meets Celtic punk (punk rock with Irish fight-song and lullaby undertones) lead to one of the most intense sets I have ever seen. Their roster of underground hits included songs such as "Big Apple Heartbreak", and yet another cover from the infamous "Pop-goes-Punk" record, Michelle Branch's "Everywhere". The set's highlight, however, would have to have been when they invited Lagwagon lead singer, Joey Cape, up on stage to perform a song by his side project band Bad Astronaut. This was a total surprise and a complete punk moment showcasing the unknown versatility of the musicians. The guys impressed me a lot, and I will be definitely be a returning show-goer.

Then came the Fat Wreck veterans and concert headliners, Lagwagon. Although the fact that the guys of Lag had very obviously been drinking backstage soon became apparent by their at-times clumsy stage moves, they soon redeemed their sloppy behaviour with dead-on musicianship. Lagwagon ripped through song after song of melodic punk with shades of metal like only Lagwagon can. The band played crowd-favourites, including songs such as "Mr. Coffee", "After you my friend", "Island of Shame", and the September 11th-inspired "Never Stops". Plus, as any Lagwagon fan worth his or her t-shirt could tell you, the night would not have been complete without their signature Van Morrison cover of "Blowin' Eyed Girl" and the Toronto gig proved to be no exception. The band finished off a stellar performance with their anthem, "May 16th", proving this was not "just another Saturday."

With help from Maria Wszolek

As we're sure that you've all noticed by now, we're missing a certain special addition to this section....but don't worry because ANTI-UNIFORM BEHAVIOUR will return next issue.

arts & entertainment

Down to the Filter: A Short Story

by Jared Michael Bryer

Holding the cigarette, I knew I had become my father. He had been smoking for twenty-five years, successfully hiding it from me for my entire childhood, and always confident that he could quit when he wanted to. He'd tried quitting a few times, but every time it was easier to accept things the way they had been. He was never addicted, just comfortable with who he was.

Changing out of the blue was a lifestyle that people like Oprah and Tony Little had been trying to sell for years. My dad just wasn't buying. He'd always known that he didn't need a makeover, and that he would never maintain an exercise routine that required him to use roller-skates to get great abs. Admitting who you were, flaws, vices and all, was the first step to real bliss. It was admitting that whatever control you thought you had was a lie.

Standing on my rooftop deck, overlooking the patchwork lights of the cityscape, I knew that, just like him, I wasn't addicted. Addiction implies an unnatural need, and addicts are people fixated on that need. I wasn't fixated on smoking. I didn't need cigarettes to get through a month, a week, or even a day. I didn't even particularly like them. But the fact remained that I wasn't going to stop smoking. I smoked; my father smoked; my grandfather smoked, and I was pretty sure it went further back than that. With a family tree like that, I figured that I might as well follow suit.

I dropped the butt into an empty coke can and I lit up another. Then I turned around and eyed the small group of people around me. Braden was sitting on the hammock talking to his twin, Brian, and Gram and Dave were just inside the house watching television.

I lived on the top two floors of an old house with Gram and Braden. Dave was a friend from school, and Brian was Braden's twin brother. I'd known the twins for years. Together, all of us were supposed to be celebrating the beginning of another school year in the typical fashion: binge drinking. I was on my fourth beer, and Brian was on his second. However, no one else was in a partying mood. Luckily, whether my roommates wanted to party or not, I knew that my old friend Jason was on his way over, and he had said on the phone that he was up for anything.

Dave got up and went to the bathroom as I inhaled some more carbon monoxide. When he emerged, he didn't sit back down in his old seat, but instead reached for his coat. Dropping my cigarette into the empty can again, I crossed between Braden and Brian and into the house, meeting him as he hovered in the doorway.

Sex! Drugs! Rock 'n' Roll!

Honeys! Bling! Hip Hop!

Gentlemen! Slush funds! Wagner?!

whatever your taste, you definitely love to

LAY-
OUT

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LOST PUMPKIN



*Was stolen or has run away
Last seen on front porch on Brunswick Avenue morning of
October 3rd 2003*

Pumpkin is orange in colour, round and approximately 14
inches in height

IF YOU HAVE MY PUMPKIN OR HAVE INFORMATION
ON ITS WHEREABOUTS PLEASE EMAIL ME AT:

missing_pumpkin@hotmail.com

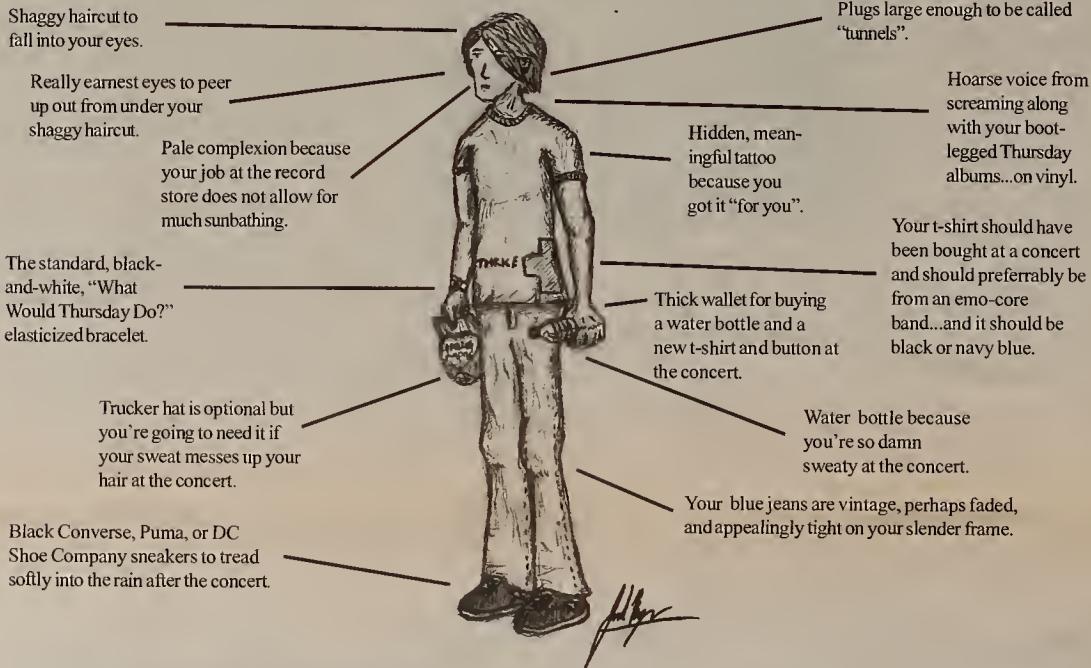
****CANDY REWARD****

arts & entertainment.

This month, we introduce our new continuing featurette: "How To Become A...." As way of explanation, the character in "How To Become A...." is a composite of many different boys and girls whom we feel are bizarrely similar in some way or linked by a common obsession or fetish. In the future, we may present incredibly cool, unique, both cool and unique or neither cool or unique people whom we feel should be emulated in our good-humouredly mocking way. By making ample use of our step-by-step example boy or girl, you too can be well on your way to becoming someone else!

In this issue's edition, inspired by a recent concert in Toronto and a forthcoming article about the band in question, we present our standard boy emulating the fans of a certain emo-core, indie band called Thursday. Herewith...

"How To Become A.... Thursday Fan"



.....Jared's story is continued from the previous page. Don't start from here! It's only one more page back! You're missing out.....

"No way, you're crazy," came Braden's response.

They were twin brothers who couldn't be more different. Braden was the pragmatist, Brian the idealist. One was shy and self-contained and the other was always the center of attention. Braden had always worked so that everything would be perfect, and Brian had always assumed that things would just fall into his lap. In that sense he was kind of like me.

"Hey!" I took me a second to realize that Brian was talking to me.

"Yeah?" My voice sounded foreign to my ears, like someone else was speaking for me, using me as a microphone.

"You ever notice that Cobra Commander and Starscream have the same voice?" It was the kind of random trivia that Brian always pulled out of the air. He had a certain knack for spontaneity, always looking to me for the answers to the absurd questions that popped out of his chaotic mind.

A long time ago, his mother told me that I was one of his father figures. There is no better way to scare a fifteen year old, short of chasing him with a machete, than to tell him he's like a father to anything. It was one of the many things I'd been told in my life that I would have been better off not knowing. I looked at him and he just sat there staring at me with a lopsided grin on his beach-bum face. It struck me how much he looked like Shaggy from the old Scooby-Doo cartoon.

Braden got up and went inside to get a bag of chips and I stole his spot on the hammock. Brian stood and did a little walk around the deck to stretch his legs. Then he grabbed another beer and asked me if I wanted one too. Gram came outside and stood there in awkward silence, looking back and

forth between my still body and Brian as he fumbled with the twist-off bottle cap.

Suddenly I felt like I was at a funeral. I was the body on display; I just wasn't dead yet. I had to give the cigarettes a few more years to cancer up my lungs, rot my teeth and give me heart disease. I would look like a collage of tobacco warning labels, sprawled out on my back on the hammock and the thought made me laugh. Admitting that you can die gives you a new appreciation for the small things in life.

It was at that moment that Jason showed up. It was like General Patton had blown in with a gust of wind to rally the troops. His entrance made us all stand; we felt compelled to snap to attention. He was a tall, red-haired Irishman, and he looked at the small group of us like we were the saddest thing he'd ever laid eyes on.

"Is this it?" he finally said, after thoroughly scrutinizing each of us. I stepped forward and explained the situation to him, handing him a beer. The great thing about Jason was that he always had a commanding air about him when it came to partying. He was like a parade that could march past, and never fail to stir people up into a better mood.

Brian was the only other person who was still in the mood to go out. Braden and Gram decided to pack things in early, one because he had work in the morning, and the other because of a family commitment. I didn't have anything to do the next day, so I figured I might as well give up my mind for the night. Jason then assumed leadership over Brian and I, issuing orders for us to follow him to the bar.....

.....catch Part II in the next issue!

frosh.



Here is a true frosh story...happened to a friend of a friend of mine:

So this guy came from the United Arab Emirates to study at Innis College. During frosh week, he discovered the hooch. See, the dark mistress is not allowed in Muslim countries so our fine friend was quite taken with her upon his arrival. It was quite the romance and it lasted for one fateful night at Hart House Farm. My friend and her co-editor had to babysit him after his love affair turned sour into a green garbage bag. Obviously they don't teach moderation in the United Arab Emirates, prohibition or not. The next morning, after an entire night of referring to my friend as "Dimples" and her co-editor as "You", the scorned lover awoke under an oak tree and consumed much OJ and stale Costco muffins. Tequila: 1. U.A.E.: 0.



COMICS

Jason Strikes Again by Jason Kieffer



Three Panels by Jared Michael Bryer

